

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 9944

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, UN, RQ
SUBJECT: COMMITTEE OF 24 (C-24) CONSIDERATION OF PUERTO RICO

REF: STATE 153477

1. EMBOFF DISCUSSED COMMITTEE OF 24 CONSIDERATION OF PUERTO RICO, PER INSTRUCTIONS REFTEL, WITH VINAY VERMA, DIRECTOR (UN), AT MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS ON JULY 13. VERMA REPLIED THAT HE COULD NOT SAY AS YET WHAT INDIA'S POSITION WOULD BE BUT HE EXPECTED THAT INDIA WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT POSTPONEMENT OF CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUE.

2. EMBOFF NOTED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER HAD REPLIED JUNE 23 TO A WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION ON PUERTO RICO. VERMA SAID THAT HE WAS PLEASED THAT HIS DRAFT OF THE RESPONSE TO THE "PRO-CUBAN" QUESTIONER (AN MP OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA) HAD BEEN APPROVED WITHOUT ANY CHANGES BY THE FOREIGN SECRETARY. VERMA POINTED OUT THAT THE FINAL SENTENCE OF THE ANSWER WHICH STATES THAT PRESENT POSITION OF THE GOI "TAKES INTO ACCOUNT" THE RESULTS OF THE 1976 ELECTIONS IS INDICATIVE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE.

3. FOR THE DEPARTMENT AND USUN'S INFORMATION, THE TEXT OF
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THE PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION AND ANSWER FOLLOWS:

QUOTE: WILL THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS BE PLEASED TO STATE: (A) THE STAND TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA IN THE UNITED NATIONS ON THE PUERTO RICAN QUESTION; (B) WHETHER IN A RECENT MEETING OF UNITED NATIONS INDIA HAS TAKEN A STAND QUITE CONTRARY TO THE ONE WHICH IT WAS PURSUING ALL ALONG;

AND (C) IF SO, THE REASONS THEREFOR?

QUOTE: ANSWER: THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): INDIA VOTED IN FAVOUR OF A RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE U.S. SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON DECOLONIZATION ON 30TH AUGUST, 1973 WHICH, INTER ALIA, IN ITS OPERATIVE PARAGRAPHS, REAFFIRMED 'THE INALIENABLE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE,' REQUESTED THE GOVERNMENT OF THE U.S.A. 'TO REFRAIN FROM TAKING ANY MEASURES WHICH MIGHT OBSTRUCT THE FULL AND FREE EXERCISE' OF THAT RIGHT, REQUESTED THE RAPPORTEUR OF THE COMMITTEE 'TO COLLECT ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION ON THE QUESTION' AND DECIDED TO KEEP THE QUESTION UNDER CONTINUOUS REVIEW.

QUOTE: IN AN EXPLANATION OF THE VOTE, THE INDIAN REPRESENTATIVE STATED THAT HIS DELEGATION HAD VOTED IN FAVOUR OF THE RESOLUTION PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF THE PARAGRAPH WHICH REQUESTED THE COMMITTEE RAPPORTEUR TO COLLECT ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION ON THE QUESTION. HE FURTHER REQUESTED THAT HIS DELEGATION'S RESERVATIONS BE NOTED IN RELATION TO SOME PROVISIONS OF THE RESOLUTION WHICH ENTERED INTO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE MATTER AND APPEARED TO BE RATHER PREMATURE IN THE LIGHT OF THE INCOMPLETE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE COMMITTEE.

QUOTE: (B) AND (C). AT THE MEETINGS OF THE U.N. SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON DECOLONIZATION HELD IN 1974, 1975 AND 1976,
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INDIA SUPPORTED MOVES TO POSTPONE THE CONSIDERATION OF THE QUESTION OF PUERTO RICO TO THE SUBSEQUENT SESSIONS OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE.

QUOTE: THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ON THIS QUESTION TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE RESULT OF THE ELECTIONS HELD IN PUERTO RICO IN NOV?34, 1976. END QUOTE.
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